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# Hansel and Gretel



Story time



# Hansel and Gretel




Miles  
Kelly





**O**nce upon a time, a poor woodcutter and his cruel wife lived near a forest. The woodcutter had two children, Hansel and Gretel. One day,



## Hansel and Gretel

Hansel heard his stepmother say to his father, "There are too many mouths to feed. You must leave the children in the forest tomorrow."

The father didn't want to abandon his children, but his wife insisted. Hansel's heart

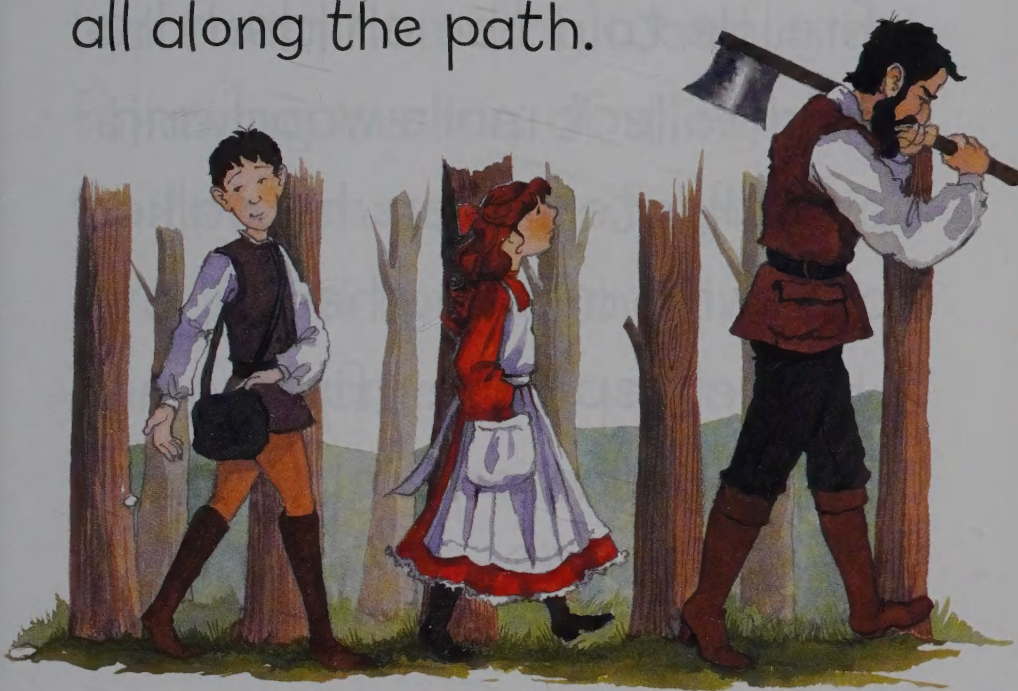
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grew icy cold, but he was a clever boy, so after dark he slipped out of the house and filled his pockets with shiny white stones.

The next morning the children followed their father deep into the forest. Hansel

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dropped the shiny stones  
all along the path.






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In the forest their father lit a fire. He told the children he would collect more wood and be back later. Then, he walked home with a heavy heart.

Hansel kept their fire going all day, but when night fell, it grew cold. "Don't worry,"






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Hansel told Gretel, and he led them home by moonlight, following his line of shiny white stones. Their father was overjoyed to see them, but their stepmother was not.

Some time passed, but one night, Hansel again heard his



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mother demanding they be left in the forest. But when Hansel tried to slip away to collect some pebbles he found the door was locked.


In the morning, their father gave them each a piece of bread, and led them deeper



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into the forest. Along the way, Hansel dropped breadcrumbs as often as he could.

After their father left, Hansel comforted Gretel, and they waited for the moon to rise. But there was not a breadcrumb to be seen. The



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birds had eaten every last one. There was nothing to do but wait until morning.

For two days they walked and walked, but saw nothing but trees. They were cold, hungry and frightened. Just as it was getting dark again,






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they came to a clearing.  
There stood a house with  
walls of gingerbread, windows  
of spun sugar and tiles made  
from striped sweets.

Hansel and Gretel couldn't  
believe their eyes, and were  
soon breaking off bits of the




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house to eat. Then a little voice said, “Nibble, nibble, little mouse. Who is that eating my sweet house?”

Out of the front door came an old woman. She smiled sweetly and said, “Dear ones, you don’t need to eat my

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house. Come inside and I'll give you lovely things to eat and warm beds to sleep in."

Hansel and Gretel needed no second asking. They were soon tucked up in cosy warm beds and full of hot milk, biscuits and apples.






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But little did they know  
they were in dreadful danger.  
The old woman was a wicked  
witch. She was planning to  
put Gretel to work and  
fatten up Hansel to eat him.

The next morning she  
locked Hansel in a cage and



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told Gretel to clean the whole house from top to bottom. The witch fed Hansel a huge plate of chicken. She gave Gretel a tiny, dry hunk of bread. But when the witch was asleep, Hansel shared his meal with Gretel.



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The witch could not see very well. So, every morning she made Hansel put his finger through the bars of the cage so she could tell how fat he was getting.

But clever Hansel poked a chicken bone through the

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bars so the witch thought he was still too skinny to eat.


After several weeks, the witch decided to eat Hansel





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anyway. She made Gretel prepare the big stone oven. But Gretel pretended she couldn't reach inside the oven. As the witch bent down to help her, Gretel gave her a big shove and slammed the oven door. And that was the



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end of the horrid, old witch!

Gretel released Hansel from the cage, and they set off to find their way home. When they got back, their father was delighted to see them.

The poor woodcutter had been so miserable since he'd

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taken the children to the forest, that his nasty wife had left him. And she was never seen again!



# The End

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Simply retold and accompanied by  
charming illustrations, this fairytale is  
sure to become a firm favourite.



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